

Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A method for selectively controlling the provision of a call waiting alert in response to an incoming call when a user is participating in an active call, comprising:
 - a. receiving an incoming call indication indicative of an incoming call intended for a user's telephone terminal;
 - b. determining whether to provide a call waiting alert to the user's telephone terminal based on a call waiting rule set, which is customized for the user; and
 - c. providing an instruction instructing a telephony switch whether to provide the call waiting alert to the user's telephone terminal.
- 15 2. The method of claim 1 further comprising receiving information indicating the user is engaged in the active call.
3. The method of claim 2 further comprising receiving identifying information identifying a party with whom the user is engaged in the active call.
- 20 4. The method of claim 1 further comprising receiving information indicating that the user is no longer participating in the active call.
- 25 5. The method of claim 1 wherein the instruction is adapted to instruct the telephony switch to provide the call waiting alert.
6. The method of claim 1 wherein the instruction is adapted to instruct the telephony switch to forward the incoming call to a voicemail system for the user.
- 30 7. The method of claim 1 wherein the instruction is adapted to instruct the telephony switch to send a busy signal to a caller initiating the incoming call.

8. The method of claim 1 further comprising receiving customizing information from the user to customize the call waiting rule set for the user.

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9. The method of claim 8 wherein the customizing information is received from a computing device via a packet network.

10. The method of claim 8 wherein the customizing information is received from a telephony terminal via an interactive voice response system.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein the call waiting rule set is customized such that providing the call waiting alert is based at least in part on information identifying a caller initiating the incoming call.

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12. The method of claim 1 wherein the call waiting rule set is customized such that providing the call waiting alert is based at least in part on a type of call associated with the incoming call.

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13. The method of claim 1 wherein the call waiting rule set is customized such that providing the call waiting alert is based at least in part on a party with whom the user is engaged in the active call.

14. The method of claim 1 wherein the call waiting rule set is customized such that providing the call waiting alert is based at least in part on a time, date, or combination thereof associated with the incoming call.

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15. The method of claim 1 wherein the call waiting rule set is customized such that providing the call waiting alert is based at least in part on a relative priority or urgency associated with the incoming call.

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16. The method of claim 1 wherein the call waiting rule set is customized such that providing the call waiting alert is based at least in part on previously called parties.

17. The method of claim 1 wherein the call waiting rule set is customized such that providing the call waiting alert is based at least in part on previous callers.

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18. The method of claim 1 wherein the incoming call indication is received from the telephony switch.

19. A system for selectively controlling the provision of a call waiting alert in response to an incoming call when a user is participating in an active call comprising:

- a. a communication interface; and
- b. a control system operatively associated with the communication interface and adapted to:
 - i. receive an incoming call indication indicative of an incoming call intended for a user's telephone terminal;
 - ii. determine whether to provide a call waiting alert to the user's telephone terminal based on a call waiting rule set, which is customized for the user; and
 - iii. provide an instruction instructing a telephony switch whether to provide the call waiting alert to the user's telephone terminal.

20. The system of claim 19 wherein the control system is further adapted to receive information indicating the user is engaged in the active call.

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21. The system of claim 20 wherein the control system is further adapted to receive information identifying a party with whom the user is engaged in the active call.

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22. The system of claim 19 wherein the control system is further adapted to receive information indicating that the user is no longer participating in the active call.

23. The system of claim 19 wherein the instruction is adapted to instruct the telephony switch to provide the call waiting alert.
24. The system of claim 19 wherein the instruction is adapted to instruct the telephony switch to forward the incoming call to a voicemail system for the user.
25. The system of claim 19 wherein the control system is further adapted to receive customizing information from the user to customize the call waiting rule set for the user.
26. The system of claim 25 wherein the customizing information is received from a computing device via a packet network.
- 15 27. The system of claim 25 wherein the customizing information is received from a telephony terminal via an interactive voice response system.
28. The system of claim 19 wherein the call waiting rule set is customized such that providing the call waiting alert is based at least in part on information identifying a caller initiating the incoming call.
- 20 29. The system of claim 19 wherein the call waiting rule set is customized such that providing the call waiting alert is based at least in part on a type of call associated with the incoming call.
- 25 30. The system of claim 19 wherein the call waiting rule set is customized such that providing the call waiting alert is based at least in part on a party with whom the user is engaged in the active call.
- 30 31. The system of claim 19 wherein the call waiting rule set is customized such that providing the call waiting alert is based at least in part on previously called parties.

32. The system of claim 19 wherein the call waiting rule set is customized such that providing the call waiting alert is based at least in part on previous callers.

5 33. The system of claim 19 wherein the call waiting rule set is customized such that providing the call waiting alert is based at least in part on a time, date, or combination thereof associated with the incoming call.

10 34. The system of claim 19 wherein the call waiting rule set is customized such that providing the call waiting alert is based at least in part on a relative priority or urgency associated with the incoming call.

35. The system of claim 19 wherein the incoming call indication is received from the telephony switch.

15 36. A method for selectively controlling the provision of a call waiting alert in response to an incoming call when a user is participating in an active call, comprising:

20 a. detecting an incoming call intended for a user's telephone terminal;

b. determining whether to provide a call waiting alert to the user's telephone terminal based on a call waiting rule set, which is customized for the user; and

c. providing the call waiting alert to the user's telephone terminal.

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